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PATENT

19. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 20, further comprising physical security data transmitted from a plurality of the individual communicating stations to a central security office over the plurality of branching nodes.

*b1*  
*Sub*  
*CA1*

~~20. (Amended) An apparatus for linking communication stations within a geographical region in computer communication, comprising:~~

- ~~a high speed backbone;~~
- ~~a plurality of branching nodes connected to the high speed backbone;~~
- ~~a plurality of communicating stations communicating over the backbone through the nodes, the nodes each housed in difference buildings;~~
- ~~the plurality of branching nodes comprising a hub directly connected with the plurality of branching nodes and directly interconnecting the plurality of communicating stations in digital communication;~~
- ~~a power concentrator located within one or more of the branching nodes, the power concentrator receiving power from a plurality of communicating stations in communication with the branching node and powering the branching node with the received power, the received power being redundant, in that one or more of the communicating stations can go off-line without stopping power to the branching node;~~
- ~~a home connection box having quick-connect types of connectors for connecting a communicating station with the hub, the connectors including a network communications connector and a power connector for supplying power from the communicating station to the hub.~~

REMARKS

Claim 21 has been allowed and allowable claim 20 has been amended to be independent. Unneeded limitations in claim 20 have been removed. Claims 14-19 have been recast as dependent on claim 20.